

APRIL 2021

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Happy Wednesday!

We hope you had a great Easter break and found time to relax, re-energise and reconnect.

In today's newsletter, you can check out these great articles and information:

- personal growth with professional development
- lunch and learn - new '*Neurodiversity in the workplace*' session has been added
- autism awareness month (including 'What is neurodiversity?')
- get active this April
- the salty truth

We encourage you to keep taking the time to identify ways you can support your ongoing self-care and wellbeing.

Stay well and have a great Wednesday.

Personal growth with professional development

Personal development is a continuous process of self-improvement – be that via learning new skills, gaining new qualifications or, on a more personal level, developing or deepening the spiritual side of yourself.

Investing time in your professional development and making learning a part of your everyday can also benefit your mental health and wellbeing. Understand and develop your own capabilities to thrive in all areas of life.

Focusing on regular personal and professional development can benefit you in different ways:

- **Mental health and self-esteem.** Personal development not only improves your work life, it also can help you to develop your personal life in a variety of different ways; for example, improving relationships and managing your emotions.

- **Improves skills and capability.** Developing yourself will also improve your skills, confidence and capabilities. This also opens up opportunities for future career growth.

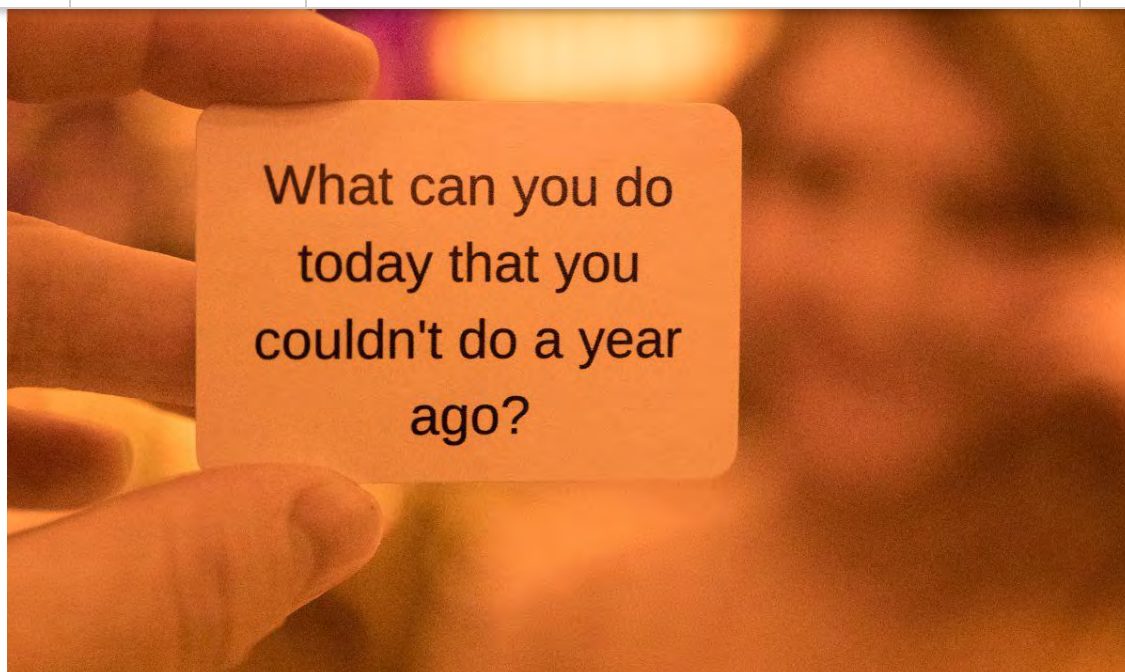
The Human Resources team recently released the 2021 Professional Development Calendar which provides you opportunities to confidently embrace challenges and empower you to build further capability.

Upcoming professional development sessions include:

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|------------------------------|--|
| 13 April | Performance Review and Development Program (PRDP) Policy and Procedure training <i>(all staff)</i> |
| 14 & 15 April | Design thinking as a strategy for innovation and problem-solving <i>(managers and supervisors)</i> |
| 19 & 20 April | Frontline leadership - management essentials <i>(managers and supervisors)</i> |
| 21, 22 & 23 April | Project management essentials <i>(HEW 6 and above, TAFE and academic staff)</i> |
| 23 April | Inclusive leadership <i>(by invitation)</i> |
| 27 April | Unconscious bias <i>(managers and supervisors)</i> |
| 27 & 28 April | Having challenging conversations - essential skills for leaders <i>(managers and supervisors)</i> |
| 29 & 30 April | Optimal motivation <i>(managers and supervisors)</i> |

Places are limited, so we encourage you to review the upcoming programs and register your session by selecting the links above or via [ELMO](#). Please ensure you click the '**Sessions**' button on your course, then select the '**+ Sign Up**' option (please do not use the '+ Enrol' button, as you are required to select a preferred session).

You can also go to the Human Resources '[Training and development](#)' page to access the comprehensive list of 2021 professional development offerings.



Lunch and learn sessions

The 'lunch and learn' sessions are designed to provide staff with information and assistance in a range of areas that support their personal and professional needs and interests.

We encourage you to check out and register for the upcoming sessions below - including the new '**Neurodiversity in the workplace**' session .

[Register here for any 'lunch and learn' session](#). A Microsoft Teams link will be sent following registration.

Upcoming sessions include:

| | |
|--|--|
| 15 April 2021 12:30pm – 1:15pm *NEW* | Neurodiversity in the workplace <i>Catherine Twiss, a psychologist and consultant well-versed in this emerging area of interest.</i> |
| 28 April 2021 12:30pm – 1:15pm | The neuroscience of compassion and how it underpins our ability to thrive <i>Dr Mary Hollick, FedUni Associate, Federation Business School and Dr Lynne Reeder, Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Science, Psychology and Sport, and National Director of the Australian Compassion Council (ACC)</i> |
| 13 May 2021 12:30pm – 1:15pm | The science behind mindfulness and wellbeing <i>Dr Lynne Reeder, Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Science, Psychology and Sport, and National Director of the Australian Compassion Council (ACC)</i> |

can access the recordings via the 'lunch and learn' section on the Human Resources [Health and wellbeing page](#).



Autism awareness month

World Autism Awareness Month is observed every year in April to raise awareness about autism, and how it affects not only those who live with it but people around them as well.

Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects the way people communicate and interact with the world. Characteristics generally appear in early childhood and will be present, in some form, for life.

People with autism may have:

- strength in areas such as attention to detail, patience, technology skills, logic skills or have greater memory for particular information
- challenges with communicating and interacting with others
- repetitive and different behaviours, moving their bodies in different ways
- strong interest in one topic or subject
- unusual reactions to what they see, hear, smell, touch or taste
- preferences for routines and dislike change

We can all support Autism Awareness Month by increasing awareness of autism, the challenge people with autism face and adopting an inclusive mindset in all that we do.

[Access more information and resources on understanding autism by going to the Autism Awareness Australia website.](#)

What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is a term to highlight how people with neurological conditions including autism, dyslexia and ADHD, contribute unique neuro-cognitive abilities to the variety within our population.

people who think differently. In the workplace it is the idea of inclusivity that extends to neurological differences, including hiring and retaining talent with neuro-variations.

With a growing awareness and increasing dialogue of the variety of communication and work styles, there comes a shift in the focus of atypical ways of thinking or learning, away from the deficits, disorders and impairments to one of neurodiversity as an advantage for the workplace and its people.

[Learn more about neurodiversity by registering for the upcoming 'Lunch and learn' session 'Neurodiversity in the workplace'](#) being presented by Catherine Twiss, a psychologist and consultant well-versed in this emerging area of interest.



Image: [I CAN Network](#)

Get active this April

Leading an active lifestyle is good for us. If you participate in regular moderate physical activity, you can expect to enjoy numerous health and social benefits, including:

- reduced risk of heart disease and stroke
- reduced risk of developing high blood pressure

- improved muscle flexibility, strength and endurance
- improved quality of sleep

Physical activity not only assists in getting fit and healthy, but provides also provides a range of social, emotional and intellectual benefits. Being active can also help:

- encourage social interaction
- improve concentration and learning
- increase personal confidence and self-awareness
- reduce feelings of depression and anxiety
- enhance self-esteem
- improve quality of life

To support you in getting Active this April, we have compiled the following event and resources for you to explore.

Get Active Victoria

Traditionally in April, Victorians are invited to participate in Active April by encouraging everyone to do 30 minutes of physical activity a day. When you sign up to become a Get Active Victoria member, you get access to free online resources which include:

- **goal setting tools** – to choose and set the number of minutes you want to be active each day
- **activity trackers** – to help you reach your goals
- **team up** – get active and motivated with others by setting up a work-based team

With an evolving collection of guided videos for workouts, challenges and games, there is sure to be a range of activities to suit you!

Check out the great resources available on the following state government websites:

- [Get Active Victoria](#)
 - [Queensland Government – Getting active](#)
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Mother's Day Classic fun run

Every year, thousands of Australians come together on Mother's Day to get active for breast cancer research.

The Mother's Day Classic raises funds that support the National Breast Cancer Foundation to support life-changing research. Since the Mother's Day Classic started in 1998, the five-year survival rate for breast cancer has increased from 84% to 91%. Research is making a difference, but there is still a long way to go.

This year's Mother's Day Classic will be held on Sunday, 9 May and is going local, with smaller community events that allow you the flexibility to participate in a virtual fun-run or walk with the community atmosphere seen at the traditional Mother's Day Classic events.

With 32 days to go, now is the perfect time to start training for 5km, 10km, 20km or **choose your own distance**. Walk, jog or run, it's completely up to you!

Heart Health walking groups

If you are unsure as to how to kickstart your fitness journey, or simply looking for a low-impact activity to get you moving, then a Heart Health walking group might be for you.

Heart Foundation Walking is Australia's largest free walking network and provides a social, fun and easy way for people to walk and be active.

By creating a personal walking plan, you receive information and support over six weeks that will assist you in getting moving and connect with what's going on in the world around you. Confidence in your ability will grow, your strength and flexibility will increase, and you'll generally feel better.

[Learn more at the Heart Foundation Walking website](#) and complete a two-minute form to get your free walking plan.

The salty truth

Salt is a common staple found on most dining tables across Australia. Salt minerals provide your body with important electrolytes that can regulate things like muscle contractions, fluid balance and nerve transmission. Your body only needs small amounts of salt – around 1-2 grams per day.

Salt is made up of both sodium and chloride, and it's the sodium part that can be damaging to health. Most Australians are eating more than the recommended amount of salt. Getting this balance right is important, because too much or too little salt can cause health problems.

Eating too much salt can lead to high blood pressure, which is a leading risk factor for heart disease. Other health risks associated with eating too much salt include kidney disease, stroke, oedema (fluid retention) and osteoporosis.

Around 75% of salt in our diets comes from processed and packaged foods. You may find this surprising, as some of these foods don't even taste salty. Foods that significantly contribute to high levels of sodium in your diet include:

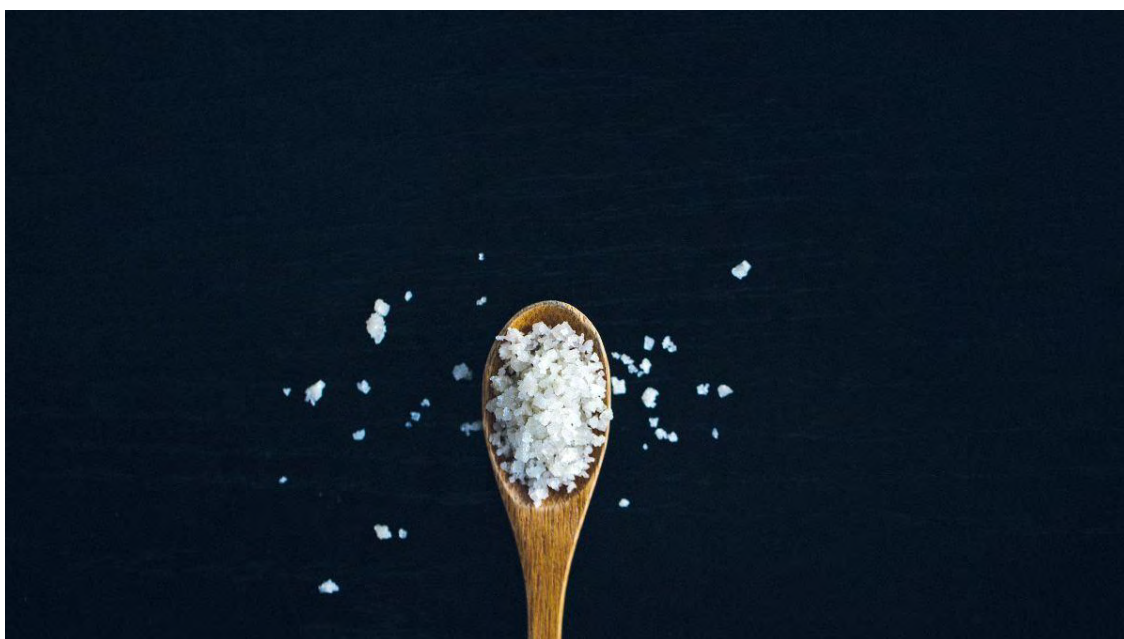
- biscuits, muffins, cakes, sauces, pizza, burgers, pasta and noodle dishes
- meat, poultry, and related products, including processed meats like ham and bacon and sausages
- bread, breakfast foods, and other products made from cereals and grains.

The good news is that salt reduction can be achieved by incorporating some simple practices into your daily eating habits, including:

- eating more vegetables
- using alternatives like herbs and spices instead of salt
- cooking at home and avoiding take-away food
- reading labels

Explore these resources to assist in you in understanding more about the impact of salt on your health and finding alternative ways to add flavour to your food.

- [Heart Foundation article 'Is salt bad for your heart?'](#)
- [Watch the recent 'lunch and learn' session 'Fast, fuss-free meals and snacks for a healthy lifestyle' presented by Murray Lewis, TAFE Teacher.](#)



Quick Links

[Mental health and wellbeing - information guide](#)

[Health and wellbeing resources](#)

[COVID-19 support for staff](#)



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